



Control Options for Yellow Flag Iris

General Information

Yellow flag iris is an invasive aquatic plant that spreads by seed and rhizomes. It is often knowingly transplanted for its showy yellow flowers, but can also be moved unintentionally. It is difficult to eradicate once established.

Manual/Mechanical Techniques

Small stands of yellow flag iris can be controlled through hand removal. Gloves should be used when handling this plant, as the sap can cause skin irritation in some people. Plants should be dug, taking care to remove as many rhizomes as possible. Plant parts should be disposed of responsibly, as rhizomes can resprout if left on the ground. The area should be monitored for regrowth from missed rhizomes. Some control may be obtained for plants in standing water by cutting all leaves and stems below the waterline. Covering plants with a heavily weighted tarp or clear/black plastic for several years can control small patches. Tarps should extend well beyond the edges of the patch. Removal of the seed pods will prevent seed dispersal, but will not harm the plants (or prevent spread of the rhizomes).



Chemical Recommendations

Yellow flag iris can be controlled using specific herbicides. **However, any herbicide applications made to a body of water or made with an herbicide registered for aquatic use, must be made by an appropriately licensed herbicide applicator. Permits may be required to control aquatic plants.** When using herbicides, always read and follow label directions for rates, spraying conditions, personal protective equipment and grazing intervals. Do not spray when it is windy or raining, or when rain is forecast. If spraying is the chosen option, spray late in the evening to reduce the direct impact on pollinating insects. Do not cut sprayed plants for at least 2 weeks after herbicide application. Herbicides should not be sprayed within 60 feet of water bodies and creeks, without further consultation with the Noxious Weed Board. Remember, it is the herbicide applicators responsibility to apply the product in accordance to the instructions on the label.

Imazapyr (Habitat™, others) is effective applied to plants before bloom or in the fall as a 1% solution along with a 1% non-ionic surfactant. *Glyphosate* (many brands and in aquatic herbicides such as Rodeo and Aquamaster) can be applied as a 5% solution rate to plants before bloom or in the fall. Applications can also be made to freshly cut stems or leaves.

NEVER apply RoundUp® or other herbicides to standing water unless they are distinctly labeled for aquatic use. Ingredients in non-aquatic products may be toxic to fish and other aquatic organisms. Aquatic formulations of herbicides are generally only available to licensed pesticide applicators in Washington State. If the target plants are immediately adjacent to or are in standing water, a state permit may be required in order to treat those plants with an aquatically approved herbicide.

- **Always read and understand the label of the herbicides you choose to use.**
- **More is NOT better when using herbicides, and may actually hinder the ability of the herbicide to injure the target plant if the solution is too strong. This wastes money and effort and puts more product into the environment than is necessary. ALWAYS follow the recommended rates on the label.**
- **With all herbicides, when you apply them is as important as how you apply them.**

The mention of a specific product brand name in this document is not, and should not be construed as an endorsement or as a recommendation for the use of that product. Herbicide information is taken from the WSU Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook and the King County Noxious Weed Program.